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COMMONWEAL

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Ford's Record as an Employer

FORD is currently advertising the claim that "on the basis of fair labor treatment" the Ford Motor Company should be at the top of the list. Whether Ford wages are highest in the industry today or not, Mr. Ford has been the first to advocate and pay high wages. On the whole his record there is quite good. He also asserts that "sanitation and other health conditions [are] the best in the industry," while comparative workmen's compensation rates may indicate his employees are better protected by safety devices than workers in other plants. Ford also recognizes the company's responsibility for older and partly incapacitated employees by keeping them on the payroll. Other achievements include the education of 20,000 deserving boys at the Ford School at Dearborn, the decentralization of the parts manufacturing industry and the encouragement of part-time farming for auto workers. He has been an industrial pioneer and the pioneer in producing cheap cars. He has been a colorful and stimulating individual in American life.

Modern Feudalism?

But can any organization which has consistently and ruthlessly thwarted the efforts of its workers to organize be at the top of any "eligible list"? Charges of labor spies and firing for union activities will not down; organizers have been beaten up in attempting to distribute union literature. Six NLRB decisions, one of them upheld in the circuit court, have found Ford guilty of violating the Wagner Labor Relations Act. Mr. Ford gives every indication of wanting to run the Ford Motor Company without interference or assistance from anyone; so far he has succeeded in hiring and firing too exclusively on his own terms. His status seems more like that of a not wholly unbenevolent feudal baron. There is something ironical about awarding contracts to produce weapons for the defense of democracy to a man who runs his industry with so high a hand. When speed is of the essence, it may not be feasible to keep him out of all defense work. But Mr. Hillman seems to have hit upon a useful principle when he suggested that the government withhold from Ford all contracts that could as easily be performed by plants that are organized. The most liberal benefits handed down from above could not compensate for depriving the workers of the basic right of organizing, the only effective means of assuring themselves a fair hearing, of working under just conditions.

Mrs. Roosevelt on Compulsory Work Camps

RECENTLY, Mrs. Roosevelt was reported to endorse the idea of compulsory work camps for boys and girls, where they would give "a year of service to the government." This may merely have been an impromptu expression of a tentative, personal idea, or it may foreshadow a serious governmental intention. We hope it is the former, not the latter. We see in many countries abroad the effects of centralizing more and more authority in the state. We see around us in our own the effects of the decentralization of the home, begun by the dislocations of industrial life, inevitably increased by the very social agencies which have stepped into the breach. There would be something very disturbing indeed about a governmental effort to combine these trends, foreign and domestic, by calling all our boys and girls away into a work army.

Trial Balloon?

Of course no debate arises about the fact that labor with the hands, for the community or the country (and comradeship in such labor) is a splendid and necessary objective—one we have neglected in training our own young, to their detriment and ours. But there is a natural framework within which the young grow most wholesomely and are educated most lastingly. It employs those agencies, personal and environmental, which are closest to the young; it centers around the home—of course, in widening circles, as boys and girls grow older. With this normal organization in mind as the constant focus, it should be possible to develop a varied and rich system of work training to give our youth that orientation in the gen-

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eral life it so often lacks. School, community, state, the forestry groups, the granges and agricultural societies, the labor unions—all have wisdom to impart and a vital stake in the result. They could function as variously as particular community needs dictated; and in the background, the federal government could assist, with benevolent interest, with funds where actually needed, with supervision and information where requested. Inevitably, the system would expand upward, into units of permanent general service for the higher age levels when the period of formative training was past. For these units, the federal government might acceptably take a much more active rôle, both in subsidizing and in directing. An interesting advance example of such an organization is actually being launched in Vermont under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture: a work service camp with a personnel drawn from college men and CCC members, which will labor at regional rehabilitation.

Note Regarding a Humorist

P. G. W. Still at Work

A SCOOP of modest implications but certainly of intense interest is achieved by the Associated Press in getting its representative through the ranks of reluctant German officialdom to the Silesian internment camp where P. G. Wodehouse is confined. That blithe chronicler of the unexpected in its most recondite and entertaining forms never in any of the books for which sad humanity is so deeply in his debt dealt with a stranger fact than his own incarceration as a prisoner of war. The universe of Wodehouse is so remote from the grim purposes now shaping a large part of the world, that one struggles in vain for a formula to cover that conjunction. Bertie Wooster or Lord Bosham would come as close with "Hullo-ullo-ullo" as any master of the more chiseled phrase. Mr. Wodehouse himself appears to have been a little overwhelmed, just for the moment, when the German army swept him up in France last May, for he was then reported to have said to his wife, "Goodbye. Perhaps now I'll write that serious novel." The present interview happily reveals that no such eventuality need be dreaded. Mr. Wodehouse is himself again. He is writing a novel about three American crooks.

What Is Needful; What, Superfluous?

Two-Sided Differences

IT IS no easy task to attempt to determine what a man or a family or a nation needs in order to live without a feeling of poverty, and without poverty itself. So many factors enter in: habits of mind and body, deeply rooted customs, circumstances of climate. To North Americans warm clothes are a necessity; to equatorial tribesmen they would be merely a nuisance. Social workers, paring it to the bone (and not their own bone either), find that US relief clients can, with superhumanly good management, be fed for one dollar or two dollars a week; Chinese relief officials guarantee to feed a refugee for one dollar a month. That a Chinese workman is accustomed to eat only a dollar's worth in 30 days is partly accounted for by the fact that it takes more than that to feed a jobless American for 7. The world—every nation, every group of families, of individuals—involves an infinite diversity of standards of living. And this is unjust the minute higher standards help create and enforce lower standards that are odious. In this process lies one of the most deep-seated roots of war. Of this war, and of all major wars. Hence the Pope's fourth requisite for peace in his address Christmas eve: "Triumph over those germs of conflict which consist in two-sided differences in the field of world economy; hence progressive action, balanced by corresponding degrees to arrive at arrangements which would give to every State the medium necessary for insuring the proper standard of living for its own citizens of every rank."

The translation is appallingly bad, but the meaning is there, and clear enough if you study it. As long as millions of Italian working people can never afford meat, while all Americans—even those on relief—expect to have it daily; as long as the wealth of the world is concentrated in the hands of some nations while others must remain content with sand and herrings; as long as masses of peoples are in the position of being "economic colonies" exploited by other peoples, so long will war threaten, and destruction, and wholesale misery. The problem cannot be solved by the havenot's grabbing from the haves and thus creating new havenots. The Pope tells us such "two-sided differences" are unjust. It is no excuse merely to murmur it was ever thus; whoever wins, that will remain a major problem of the peace.

Forum

In Simple Fact—President

IF YOU look at it simply, what the President's speech effected was to pledge our irrevocable opposition to the ideology of the Axis powers. We are committed now, the question is settled. In the immediate and concrete political organization of our world, the unit called the United States is from now on irreducible to a partnership with the totalitarian powers, committed to a natural solidarity with those peoples throughout the world who are opposing them. The principle is settled that we will not pay the price that would be exacted for appeasement. We will not divide the world with the totalitarian powers because by

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dividing it with them, and in their manner, we would make it into a world we would no longer want to live in. It is settled now in principle that we refuse the short cut to a new order, that our lot is cast with those who want to work out a new world—their old enduring dream—in their own slow way, persisting in their ancient belief that men must walk freely and not be driven. It is settled now that we feel at home only with those who seek a life of justice in the brotherhood of man, who, century after century, failing, have never abandoned their search. That is all the President has done. That is all there was to be done. We have taken our stand against an arrogant attempt to impose what at best is a cold, mechanistic order, what at worst brings the destruction of profound human rights. Under our heritage of freedom we have seen our duty.

It is not settled whether or not we will come into the actual contact and destruction of war. Undoubtedly we have accepted now the risk of war. You do not decide in principle whether to go or not to war. You decide where you stand and the question of war is a subsidiary one. The real issue is joined on the plane of our refusal to accept an eventual collaboration with the Axis powers and our now avowed alliance with their opponents. Because we are now virtually at war, men of faith will pray for the swift advent of the peace we all desire. That peace must be based on the failure of the totalitarian plan.

C. G. PAULDING.

Peace and/or Appease—Senators

THERE is not only disagreement, but also grave mutual distrust and growing hate, between two pressure groups in the US. According to the words spoken by the leaders, there should be no great issue between them—let's call them "warmongers" and "appeasers" so that at least their enemies will recognize them. Both sides agree on terrific national armament. With few exceptions both sides utter resolutions against sending an expeditionary force abroad. With few exceptions both sides encourage the maximum supplying of Britain. Apparently the "appeasers" suspect that the "warmongers" really want to get the US army and navy in the fighting as quickly as they can pull along the public. The "warmongers" suspect that the "appeasers" really want to stop the sustaining aid to Britain and let Hitler establish his rule where he might if we furnished no opposition.

For example: members of the United States Senate ought not have their warnings swept aside, as being merely echoes of foreign dictators. Hiram Johnson, leaving California for Washington, "off to the wars" as he says, wonders aloud if the US is fixing up an army of 4,000,000 men to send to Tierra del Fuego. Simply saying that Senator Johnson is doing work the dictators want done, and refusing to give a hearing to such a person, does not satisfy that wonder. Perhaps it would be a good thing to send an army of 4,000,000 to a more likely region? Why not get at the issue with more loyalty and less suspicion?

Apparently Senator Wheeler wants the US to work now for a peace by negotiation. The howls that immediately went up almost prevented the few serious criticisms from being heard. Someone managed to get through the observation that such action by the US would require the US to stand arbiter of the justice of the peace and to join in enforcement of the peace that resulted or to go to war if none resulted. Raymond Clapper, with his usual productiveness, gave his opinion that no true negotiation could be possible until Hitler saw himself balked definitely in the further extension of his empire and that just negotiation would be impossible until England were enabled to prove her unconquerability. But such rational treatment is overwhelmed by outbursts of increasing emotion. Even Senator Tydings's suggestion that the US, while maintaining shipments to Britain, ask both sides for their peace terms was sneered down.

The common facile answers do not even touch the roots of the questions. "America is doomed unless England with the US controls the Atlantic, and the US with England controls the Pacific!" So why should the rest of the world accept that arrangement? Couldn't we search for a formula of power which is not monopolized. Shouldn't we have a longer policy of cooperation which will not lead so inevitably to later military challenge?

Then the answer, "Hitler cannot be trusted as a guarantor of any possible negotiated peace." That is a mere truism which hides the questions of how international affairs can ever be stabilized, of what European and German régime we will ever accept as party to a peace pact, of how the emergence of another nazi gang is to be opposed. Walter Lippmann individualistically recognizes "the crucial question of the war . . . to find a Germany with which it is possible to negotiate," but no one is willing to relate this question with the one the senators ask, as it would be logical to do.

Again, with a queer mixture of Marxism and cynicism, those who ask peace terms and war aims are told that the aims and terms are so far purely negative, that the positive provisions will be governed by the character and conduct of the war itself. But lumping the war and peace together does not free one from any responsibilities for either the peace or the war. The problems of negotiated peace and war aims and peace terms are exactly those of our central responsibility. Without some faint tracings of an acceptable policy toward them, our sending men into the battle would be marching men into a formless anarchy.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

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They Pronounce It Pre-meer

Americans, even the most dignified, lend themselves to all kinds of madness for it.

By Michael Costello

CHICAGO LOOP traffic went haywire for two days last October. Police worked double shifts. Street cleaners struggled against drifts of ticker tape and torn-up telephone books. Surging crowds packed State Street, and store windows were barricaded.

Theater ushers dressed as Northwest Mounted police rode white horses into hotel lobbies. Pretty girls had their legs measured in public. Five thousand floor walkers, college boys, insurance salesmen and bus drivers entered a he-man beauty contest for the honor of sitting beside Madeleine Carroll or Paulette Goddard in a movie theater. Women—more than 12,000 of them—contested for the earth-shaking privilege of sitting next to Gary Cooper.

Why? Because Hollywood producer Cecil B. DeMille had decided that the première of "Northwest Mounted" should be held in the Windy City.

The movie première — pronounced pre-meer, with heavy emphasis on the second syllable—is a national phenomenon. Behind each première is a little group of harried, sardonic studio press agents, called "flacks" in the trade. Most are young but they have the wise, sad expressions of men who have tasted the fruits of civilization and found them bitter.

Usually they arrive in town weeks before a première. They live in a madhouse of make-believe and zany carryings-on. They pull the strings that make public officials play the fool and bring plain people by the millions into the streets. They count success in columns of newspaper space, feet of newsreel, hours on the radio.

Some studios refuse to spend a penny for a première, insist that the local community pay for its own fun. Others share the cost. But whoever pays for it, plain John and Mary citizen do their enthusiastic part to convert a press agent stunt into a civic celebration. Americans like a parade. Besides, millions of men and women get a terrific wallop out of "personal contact" with screen favorites, even at a hundred yards in a crowd of a hundred thousand.

When two cities quarrel over the location of a première, flacks know that the angels are on their side. This happened recently when Tacoma and Seattle vied for the opening of "Tugboat Annie Sails Again." Scene of the picture was Puget Sound and Annie's home town was called "Secoma." Both cities could claim her.

Seattle finally refused to put up the required cash, while Tacoma came through nobly. The cast arrived, very properly, by steamboat, with a flag-draped escort of 100 tugs, 100 private yachts, and 100 excursion boats, freighters, dredges and coastwise craft, led by the US Coast Guard Cutter "Atlanta." A 60-piece Army band from Fort Lewis, Washington, met them at the pier. A guard of honor of US sailors marched ahead of the car that carried Marjorie Rambeau, star of the film, to the theater, while 35 private military planes wheeled overhead. The mayor proclaimed a "Tugboat Annie Day" and the schools closed; 40,000 soldiers in nearby cantonments got a day's furlough; coast defense guns boomed salutes; a plaque in honor of the fictional lady of the sea was unveiled at the civic center.

The opening of "Young Tom Edison" at Edison's boyhood home, Port Huron, Michigan, provided one of the most remarkable press-agent pictures in the history of movie premières. Henry Ford, the world's richest man; his son Edsel; Louis B. Mayer, head of MGM, the largest studio; and young Mickey Rooney, star of the film, were photographed together riding a four-seat tandem bicycle. Gentlemen, it was stupendous!

Studio employees say that when the head of Twentieth Century-Fox had read half the script of "Brigham Young" he dropped the manuscript, assumed a faraway look, began to mutter: "Great picture! We'll première it in Salt Lake . . . governor . . . seagulls . . . parade. . . ." The Salt Lake City première was one of the best. More than 100,000 people lined the parade route while the stars took bows gracefully.

Doggy

For utter screwiness, the Albany, Georgia, première of "Biscuit Eater" is tops. The picture was an inexpensive B-class opus about a hunting dog; there wasn't a first-string name in the cast. But that didn't stop Cliff Lewis, Paramount publicity head.

"Make it a doggy première," he said, and announced to a palpitating Southland that "Bing Crosby's dog," "Dorothy Lamour's dog," and

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half a dozen other canine Hollywoodians would attend. The visiting dogs invited all the aristocratic canines in the South to the première, and they came by the score. Lewis had decreed that the dogs, which occupied the first two rows in the theater, "must wear formals." Gentlemen dogs wore white ties and tails. Lady dogs wore satin, and corsages presented by Paramount. The crowds roared its approval, the press wires carried the story and as a publicity stunt it was terrific.

Paramount's "Union Pacific" première in Omaha last year was a three-way tie-up. The studio, the city and the railroad coöperated, sharing costs and profits. For weeks before the opening, a thousand otherwise sane businessmen, preachers, reporters, teachers and salesmen allowed their beards to grow, to give a historical aspect to the city. Women went shopping in sunbonnets and calico dresses; Indians pitched tents before the railroad station; storekeepers built false fronts on their establishments, harking back to pioneer days.

The railroad sent two special trains on a nation-wide tour, one brand new streamliner and a facsimile of the first Union Pacific train. Movie actors in costumes rode the specials, were fêted in 53 cities, made thousands of platform appearances in villages as the trains slowed down.

For the première of "Virginia City" in that ghost town last March, Governor E. P. Carville of Nevada invited ten other governors to be his guests; six came. So also did trainloads of Easterners, attracted by the names of Errol Flynn, Randolph Scott, Miriam Hopkins—and by advertising for which the Chamber of Commerce and the railroad paid. They swarmed over the town and overflowed into nearby Reno, wearing supposed copies of oldtime prospectors' duds, riding rented horses, shooting pistols into the air, playing poker on curbstones, drinking red-eye whisky straight. They got into a brawl which threatened life and limb and caused cautious studio officials to spirit the visiting stars out of town and away from harm. That got on the press wires too, so the première was a success.

Not a first showing

A "world première" need not be the first public showing of a picture. Hollywood usually has its own previews first. Regina, Saskatchewan, whooped it up for "Northwest Mounted" two days before the Chicago première. That picture went to the Windy City merely because of a producer's whim.

"Chicago has never had a world première," DeMille said. "Let's go there." For 20 years the State Street Council, a powerful group of department store owners, had fought anything that disrupted the even flow of business traffic. Job of overcoming their opposition went to Carl Krueger, promotion man extraordinary. It cost him three luncheons to convince the dignified elders of State Street that additional hundreds of thousands of customers between a noon parade and an evening showing of the picture would be fine for business. Then the merchants offered not only to permit the parade but to sponsor it.

"Northwest Mounted" got free publicity far beyond the fondest hopes of any producer. All the big department stores plugged it in their advertising. The elevated railway pasted up thousands of gaudy posters which cost DeMille $58 to produce and which occupied $10,000 worth of choice space free. One newspaper, with an eye to both theatre and department store good will, devoted its front pages of both first and second sections to the première.

At a banquet of the State Street Seniors, composed of merchants and lawyers, DeMille was guest of honor and several stars attended. Whereas in previous years even the most noted business leaders had attracted only 1,000 guests, 1,700 crowded into the "Northwest Mounted" banquet and 1,000 others applied but could not be seated.

The picture was immensely successful, not only in Chicago but in all cities within 200 miles, and the State Street merchants reported an upswing of 88 percent in business for the two days.

When Paramount last year directed Carl Krueger to stage a première of "Disputed Passage" in Detroit, simply because the town hadn't had one for a long time, he went to the automobile manufacturers, offering to help put over their annual auto show. "We'll make it a "Première of Stars and Cars,'" he told them, promising Dorothy Lamour, of the celebrated sarong, as guest of honor.

A week later the studio withdrew Lamour; she would be needed on the lot at the time! Detroit newspapers immediately demanded that she be allowed to come. A telegram from Miss Lamour stated that she would attend, studio or no studio. Cheers in the motor city. Then another telegram. The studio would not permit the trip.

This time the mayor, the president of the city council, presidents of two universities, and leaders in the automobile industry bombarded Hollywood with frantic pleas. In the end she did arrive, as the studio had intended all the while. A crowd estimated by police as the third largest in the city's history turned out.

Flacks know that names make news, so they fill premières with front-page personalities. Public officials cheerfully coöperate because they know the vote-getting value of appearing on chummy terms with the stars. Kentucky's Governor (now Senator) "Happy" Chandler, and Lieutenant Governor (now Governor) Keen Johnson journeyed to Hollywood for the opening of a film called "Kentucky."

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Rockne

An outstanding example of press-agent wizardry was the opening of Warner Brothers' "Knute Rockne" at South Bend, Indiana, last October. A trainload of celebrities from movies, sports and politics joined 100,000 other visitors to the city. At a banquet on the Notre Dame campus, broadcast nationally, the president of the university presided; Kate Smith sang "God Bless America"; Franklin Roosevelt, Jr. read a letter from his father: ". . . influence Rockne wielded . . . deep inspiration . . . ideals . . . strong minds and bodies. . . ." Any time a press agent can put Kate Smith, football heroes, dignitaries of the Catholic Church, Hollywood stars and a message from the President on a coast-to-coast hook-up to plug a movie, that press agent knows his way around.

All first-string movie critics attend premières. Special cars rush them from metropolitan centers, pleasant hotel rooms await them, banquets are spread before them. "We want you to tell the *truth*, pal," the press agents insist. "The unvarnished truth. If the show's lousy, say so."

But the critics are rarely supermen. Their reaction is likely to be, "By George, it *is* great!"

No one knows just when "opening night" developed into "première." But when David W. Griffith showed the first full-length feature on Broadway, in 1915, the actors arose in the audience to take bows. That probably was the beginning.

This much is certain: the première in its grand tradition came to its fullest flower with the opening of "Gone with the Wind" in Atlanta. This was a Social Event; 2,000 lucky people paid $10 each to get in, while 10,000 others were turned away. Atlanta society decided who should attend, who should not, and gave the proceeds to charity. For that opening, even critics had to pay their admission fees.

Somewhere tonight the lights are blazing. Somewhere a Hollywood actor stands, slightly ill at ease, facing a mob of his or her admirers.

"I'm always glad to get back to this dear city," he is telling them.

In hotel rooms the flacks have Hollywood on the phone. They are saying, "Listen, Joe. It's going over big. Whole town's fighting to get up close. Yeah, Joe, a great picture. Terrific. I was surprised."

Hitler's Teacher

Mussolini set up the frame-work, made the pattern, for Hitler to develop.

By **Luigi Sturzo**

HITLER came to power in 1933; Mussolini came to power in 1922. Disparity in achievement makes many forget this Italian priority in the application of method. What has been the interplay of responsibility, the exchange of experience between the two dictatorships?

In 1920 and 1921 Mussolini proclaimed himself the champion of the bourgeoisie tormented by communists, socialists and "Popolari" (Catholic Democrats). He vowed also that he would vindicate the honor of the nation that had been slighted at the Paris Peace Conference. Industrialists, landlords, politicians and militarists placed their confidence in him and contributed funds for his armed squads, notwithstanding that he had founded them in 1919 with an anticapitalist, antimonarchical and revolutionary program. For more than two years he attacked trade unions and other workers' organizations, cooperatives, and municipalities where his adversaries were in the majority. The government tolerated this; the courts were slow and indulgent, and the nationalists and conservative bourgeoisie readily enough used the fasces to break strikes and intimidate workers. By October, 1922, conditions were ripe for the March on Rome. As is well known, the King yielded; the men who made up the Italian Parliament yielded, fearing violence against their persons they granted the man who controlled that violence full power to wield it. It must not be forgotten, however, that they agreed to collaborate with him in the hope that in time the country would return to the constitution.

* * *

Success always is imitated: here was a new formula, the formula of violence. Soon de Rivera in Spain and Hitler in Germany were experimenting with it. The Munich Putsch of 1923 failed, and with that failure came Hitler's realization of the need to follow closer his Italian model and to eschew hastiness. He turned to the methodical development of his squads, the expansion of his youth organizations and emphasized the aid he could bring to the industrialists and German mag-

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nates who financed him. His direct attacks upon communist militants and upon the Social Democrat and Catholic democrat parties, with propaganda against Versailles as emotional background, won him the tolerance of the various local and central governments and endeared him to the militarists and to the German Right. Hitler waited longer than did Mussolini in following his dictatorial ambition because he realized that he could use and greatly needed the existing democratic electoral procedure. He used this procedure with great ability—and the pressure he exerted on opinion brought results. President von Hindenburg offered him the Chancellery. In 1933 he did what Mussolini had done in 1922; he accepted the collaboration of the nationalists and conservatives who had facilitated his rise to power, if only to eliminate them later. Not until he received full powers from the Reichstag did he dismiss the deputies.

From then on he continued to parallel, but more rapidly, the course shown by the Italian. Mussolini, after having abandoned an even nominal policy of cooperation with outside groups, had a free hand; he abolished municipal and provincial electoral bodies; dissolved all political parties except the Fascist, which he made the sole organ of power; gave all the privileges to the fascist syndicates, and forced the youth of both sexes to enroll in fascist organizations. This did not suffice. School, press and radio became monopolies of the régime. The Chamber of Deputies, deprived of freedom and independence, saw its members become rubber stamps, elected by a "yes" or "no" on lists approved by Il Duce. A Grand Council, a fascist organ of the government, superior to the ministers, was organized along with a fascist militia, a secret police, the "Ovra," and a Supreme Tribunal to suppress any free and independent activity.

* * *

Hitler hastened to outshine his teacher. The Gestapo is better known than the Ovra; in Italy they never matched the Reichstag fire; June 20, 1934, outdid June 10, 1924. Upon Von Hindenburg's death, Hitler undertook the double duties of Chancellor and President of the Reich and assumed the title of Reichsfuhrer.

The totalitarian state had arrived. The formula is not Hitler's but Mussolini's, who defined it in 1926—"Nothing outside or above the State, nothing against the State, everything with the State, everything for the State." Writing the article *fascism* in the Italian Encyclopedia, Mussolini repeated: "For fascism everything is in the State and nothing human or spiritual exists, far less has value, outside the State." The reality corresponds to the definition: in Italy one speaks of State, in Germany of Reich; in Italy of nation, in Germany of race. The plain, the crystal clear truth is that totalitarianism has been established in the north and in the south.

* * *

Reciprocal influence in policy continued. The anti-clerical Mussolini, who in the first fascist program of 1919 had proposed radical measures against the Church, once in power began to favor the clergy and to act in friendly fashion toward the Vatican. Knowing that Cardinal Gasparri had had cautious contact with the liberal Prime Ministers, Orlando and Nitti, for a viable solution of the Roman Question, Il Duce presented himself as the man to achieve it. The negotiations were secret, and on February 11, 1929, the Lateran Treaty and the Concordat were subscribed. In consequence, Mussolini gained the goodwill of the Catholics of the world, who saw the fact and not the motive, and succeeded in creating a confused and regrettably superficial relationship between fascism and the Church.

In Germany, threatening excommunication, several bishops had forbidden the faithful to join the Nazi Party; but when Hitler attained power, he declared himself friendly to the two great churches, the Protestant and the Catholic, and was quick to start negotiations for a new concordat for the whole Reich, instead of maintaining the six existing for the different states of the Weimar Republic. Von Papen rushed to Rome; Monsignor Kaas, secretary of the German Center Party, who was in Rome, supporting the thesis of the Concordat; Dr. Wirth, Catholic ex-chancellor, also in Rome, lobbied among prelates and cardinals. Thus, Hitler did not need the seven years it had taken Mussolini. He negotiated and concluded a concordat in less than seven months. Confidence in him increased; a large number of Catholics in various parts of the world regarded him with favor. For many of them Hitler had become a savior: had he not, like Mussolini, saved his country from bolshevism, atheism and total disorder?

* * *

Even in the international field, Mussolini's experience preceded that of Hitler. Mussolini first of the two experimented with the limitless possibilities of extorting "appeasement." The question of the boundaries of Yugoslavia and Fiume, settled by the Treaty of Rapallo in 1920 by Giolitti and Sforza, had not satisfied the Italian nationalists. In 1923 Mussolini occupied Fiume, which had remained a free city. Geneva, Paris and London were perplexed; but, after all, Mussolini had "saved" Italy from bolshevism; Fiume must not be allowed to cause him difficulties; let him settle the matter with Yugoslavia. After Fiume came the bombardment of Corfu to revenge the members of General Tellini's mission in Albania, murdered, it was said, by a band of Greeks. Greece

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and England protested and asked for the intervention of the League of Nations. Mussolini refused to submit to Geneva, but finally agreed to have the matter settled by the Committee of Ambassadors in Paris, which handled the evidence so that the Greeks had to pay an indemnity.

In 1927 the agitation was against France and the cries that filled the streets were: "We want Nice and Savoy." The propaganda for annexation of Corsica was started. The heated speeches of Mussolini for the future war against Paris and Geneva were minimized in London as oratory for home consumption.

In 1928 Mussolini signed a treaty of amity with the Negus of Abyssinia; the treaty containing a clause for the arbitration of all questions. Yet, already in 1932, according to General De Bono, Il Duce ordered preparations for war against Ethiopia: the "imperial" war. The necessary and immediate excuses for this action were available, of course, in due time.

In 1933 Hitler resigns from the League of Nations; in 1935 he disregards the military clauses of the Versailles Treaty. In 1936 he violates the Locarno Pact. His troops occupy the demilitarized Rhine Zone and begin the construction of the Siegfried Line. Hitler profits from Mussolini's experience; he has learned to measure the futile protests of Paris, London and Geneva.

* * *

The gifts from Italy are returned tenfold from the north in a deplorable action and reaction between the totalitarian states. The racial theory was not conceived in Italy, where the psychological and pathological conditions, present in Germany, were lacking. Italians spoke of *stirpe,* meaning descent or family, and a degree of fantasy traced their ancestry to the "Romans" whom a century ago the poet Giusti satirized as the "bastards of Aeneas." But Hitler's example was contagious. Perhaps to remedy a certain inferiority complex of the poor Latins (held up to ridicule and scorn by Luther and from then on by every respectable German) even in Italy, where there is so rich an heritage of diverse bloods, they began to speak of the race problem and to make it an object of "study" and of "law." As an answer to the remarks of Pius XI, fascist spokesmen denied that there was any imitation on the part of fascism because they said the racism of Germany was "philosophic," that of Italy a fact of "biology."

From racism to anti-semitism there is but a step. After Mussolini's repeated declarations that "anti-semitism would be inconceivable in Italy," he enacted anti-semitic laws, expelled the non-native Jew, restricted the professional, legal and scholastic rights and the right to work of the Jew of Italian birth.

There was the imitative period of the accession to power, the period of doctrinal formation, but practical Italo-German cooperation in the field of foreign affairs began in 1936. After the Abyssinian conquest, Il Duce stated he was satisfied; he had settled all questions with France on January 7, 1935, by the Laval agreement. From England, some time before, he had received Jubaland. Hitler after the occupation of the Rhineland had said that he sought and expected nothing from England and France. Italy thereupon gave up her claims on Austria and Hitler aided Il Duce in the Spanish adventure. This sealed the totalitarian alliance; and in doing so gave, permanently, the direction of affairs to the more powerful of the two partners.

There is no doubt that the plan for a new order in Europe and in the world belongs to Hitler & Co. When, in 1933, the Fuhrer was doubtful about Il Duce, a "new map of the Great Germany" with a swastika over Trieste was published. The map has been revised many times since then and enlarged "on scientific basis" by a secret specialized commission composed completely of Germans. Mussolini had to have his share. Hence the fascist assault on Albania and the agitation for Corsica, Nice and Savoy. The Rome-Berlin Axis with the Iron Pact of Milan is a consequence and foreshadowed the present war. Hitler consented to the deportation of Germans from South Tyrol to seal the pact.

* * *

In order to declare war Hitler had to be sure of Russia. He did not dare repeat the Kaiser's blunder. Were the anti-bolshevik campaign and activities of the Axis in the Spanish war obstacles to an understanding with Stalin? Neither Hitler nor Mussolini thought so. After all, Mussolini had always prided himself as having been the first to recognize the Soviet government and the relations between Moscow and Rome had always been cordial. On his part, Hitler had renewed the treaty with Russia as soon as he came into power, despite the fact that the preceding government let it lapse. What mostly interested the two was that France and Czechoslovakia should break the pacts that Paris and Prague had with Moscow, and their efforts to achieve this were successful.

The German-Russian pact was a Hitlerian triumph. Rome itself was kept in the dark until things were definite. In the Milan pact the war against Poland was set not to take place for three years; but Hitler grasped the moment; perhaps he believed that after a Polish defeat London and Paris would propose another "Munich."

The stages fascist Italy has undergone—neutrality, non-belligerency, intervention—were inevitable in the concrete logic of historical events. The fasces and the swastika represent similar experiences, have a common aim and destiny. The lot of both hangs on the outcome of the war.

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English Catholic "Fascists"?

What are they said to be, and how have they built up the picture?

By Donald Attwater

FROM time to time there are references in the press of the United States to what is called the fascism of certain English Catholics, and it seems worth while to take a look at the phenomenon to which these words refer, to find out if we can what it is and its degree of importance.

As a Catholic Englishman resident in England I know perfectly well what the American writers are alluding to. They are not referring to Catholics who belong to the British Union of Fascists: there are (or were) such, and I am told that their number was considerable (whatever "considerable" may mean in this context), but they cut very little ice and were regarded as harmless cranks by those of their coreligionists who had heard of them. Nor is it meant that some English Catholics openly or covertly support a nazi régime: I think that none do. And exception is not taken to those who point out the advantages that have been legitimately obtained for their peoples by totalitarian rulers: e.g., that railroad trains in Italy now run more punctually than before. Indeed, the people the American writers have in mind are distinguished not only by their opposition to nazism but also by their animus against Germany in general, which they like to designate, the whole by the part, Prussia.

To this last extent, and negatively, then, the epithet "fascist" might seem not inappropriate, for the people referred to sometimes speak in terms and advocate policies that are painfully reminiscent of some of those of the Italian leader. But this does not make them fascists, and they do not in fact advocate the setting up of any totalitarian system in Great Britain, though, did circumstances permit, they would welcome a close political collaboration between their country and the Italy of Mussolini. I therefore demur to the use of the word "fascist" as tendentious, abusive, misleading and inaccurate; if some label must be used then "latinophile" (a barbarous enough word) is as good as any and better than most.

This so-called fascist tendency first became very noticeable when Italy invaded Abyssinia. The more extreme latinophiles went so far as to say the invasion was morally justified, but their casuistry made no great impression. Most of them were content to make all possible, and some impossible, excuses for the Italian government's action, in particular laying the blame for it on England and, to a lesser degree, France; moreover, the fact that Great Britain's record of colonial expansion is far from immaculate was made to be a reason for practically calling hypocrites that overwhelming number of honest English people who were horrified at Mussolini's doings. Italy, in fact, could do no wrong in the eyes of latinophiles; France could do no wrong—so long as she was represented by anybody who combined profession of the Catholic faith with a determination to repress Germany and communism; Franco and his followers, *ex professo* Catholics and crusaders, could do no wrong—not even when they accepted nazi help.

All this and its manifold ramifications was characterized by an extraordinary tendency to short-circuit any question of morality that arose and to govern all by political considerations and the axiomatic worthiness of the end in view; and whenever religion was brought into the debates it was easy to get the impression that divine truth is a department of human culture. At times things were said and policies advocated that gave substance to the observation that Christian love can be interpreted so technically that it sometimes is difficult to distinguish it from plain hate.

More recent events

Do not ask me what the latinophiles have made of more recent events, for frankly I do not fully know. The fall of France is, of course, attributed to the poisonous influence of "The Reds" (*front populaire*), but on the other hand neither is the Catholic soldier, the apparently totalitarianizing Pétain, approved: there is a mysterious *tertium quid* called "The Real France," which looks precious like a figment of wishful thinking. Such have been the contortions of one English Catholic paper in this regard that this very week a priest writes accusing it of putting national before religious considerations. As for Mussolini, there are some who still make excuses for him, and blame it all on the "folly of sanctions": "sanctions" may well have been bad politics, but they at least had the support of the sincerely shocked British people.

How account for this attitude, or series of attitudes, which seems so wrong-headed to most Catholics in England and provokes hostile com-

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ment in the United States? The following seem to me to be among the explaining factors.

As an institution the Catholic Church is the great upholder of legitimate authority, discipline and good order. But she knows and teaches that the perfect obedience is that which is given willingly, arising from internal, personal impulsion rather than from external compulsion, which is only a secondary sanction. Now once a Catholic puts the emphasis in the wrong places and makes external control primary he is tending towards a (not exclusively) fascist error; he becomes "authoritarian," seeing obedience almost as an autonomous virtue, "*blind* obedience"; and it is by means of such an obedience, enforced by external coercion, that totalitarianism imposes its will. Such a Catholic may come to admire this aspect of totalitarianism, and to minimize or deny its abuses and cruelties. He is taken in by the demagogues of "order," especially if they make profession, whether sincere or opportunist, of Catholicism. It is easy to put back crucifixes into schoolrooms and the action may mean nothing; the important, and difficult thing is to restore the crucifix to the hearts of men. It may be true that Pétain has no totalitarian aims, but his reported restoration of La Grande Chartreuse to its monks does not prove it.

Again, the Catholic Church represents the only fully authentic Christianity; she is the repository of all known spiritual truth. But that does not mean that non-Catholics are necessarily deprived of all Christianity, all religious truth (during the Jansenist controversy the Holy See solemnly condemned the error that no grace is given outside the visible Church); an individual Catholic, cleric or layman, can be wrong and do wrong on an occasion when an individual non-Catholic is right and does rightly: the same is true of "Catholic peoples" and "non-Catholic peoples." When we Catholics forget this, we fall into sectarianism. There arises, for example, the phenomenon of English Catholics who belittle their own country and people, take up an anti-English attitude in various matters, because England is a "Protestant nation" and is therefore pretty certain to be wrong: even if she be right she is so for wrong reasons or by sheer chance! Poland, on the other hand, or Ireland, can only suffer wrong, never do it, for they are Catholic nations and have suffered greatly and nobly for their faith. *Non sequitur.*

Now this business of a Protestant and therefore perfidious England is a favorite plank in the Italian fascist platform, as well as among those Frenchmen who favor an authoritarian state and a political *bloc* of Latin countries. The United States is involved in a like condemnation.

The Church has always disapproved (or more) what on the continent of Europe is called "liberalism," but in England the word has not quite the same sense. We have never, and do not now except among a few Catholics, use the word to connote irreligion and the subversion of civil order; some of the most eminent English Catholics have been liberals, many have been, and are, "lefter" still. Chesterton was a radical for years, Belloc sat in Parliament as a Liberal member. Democracy, the parliamentary system, representative government —call them what you will—must be judged on their merits, and it is open to anyone to reject them for good reasons. Some Catholics do, but in their rejection of liberalism and democracy they give the impression of emptying out the baby with the bath water; they seem likewise to condemn political and social liberty, personal responsibility, the right of every man not to be exploited by the more powerful; and not infrequently they appear to imply that those Catholics who disagree with them are out of step with the Church (another manifestation of sectarianism).

It is not, then, difficult to see why they become suspect of fascist leanings; we all know what Mussolini thinks of liberalism, democracy, freedom, because he has told us, and we know how many in Italy have identified Fascism with the Church.* (It has been the privilege of the present writer to be condemned as a bad Catholic by an Italian paper because he criticized fascist sabre-rattling.)

The word "culture" in its extended sense came into the common English vocabulary during the last war: we poured not unjustified scorn on the current German conception of *kultur,* even queried if national cultures exist, and then proceeded (some of us) to get very excited about them. Since then a school of thought has flourished in England, principally composed of Catholics, which emphasizes the cultural contribution to the world of the Christian peoples bordering the northern shores of the Mediterranean. I am not going to discuss that vast subject here, but it must be observed that the latinophiles' admiration of "Latin culture" goes beyond all reason; it has become an obsession with some of them. It would appear that the north Germans have hardly got further than they were in the days of Tacitus; that what is specifically English in our culture is mostly "Protestant," and therefore inferior;† that where the Roman soldier did not set his foot or where later the Roman Church was abandoned, there can be only bar-

* It should be noted that the Pope's practical application of his judgment on totalitarianism may legitimately vary somewhat according to whether he is acting as Supreme Pontiff of the whole Church or simply as Primate of Italy.

† Our "intellectuals" did not think that way a century ago. Had Purcell lived at a time when he could have known the Italian musical compositions of the school of Vinci, wrote the great Catholic Charles Butler in 1822, "he would, in all probability, have been more elegant, more sublime, and more impassioned: but he would have been less English. This addition, therefore, to his glory an Englishman can scarcely wish him to have possessed."

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barism till one or the other returns. No doubt I exaggerate a little, but it is nothing to the exaggerations of the latinophiles, and while perhaps it would be difficult to exaggerate the influence in the past of religion on culture, this Latin civilization business is a hopeless oversimplification. In its maintenance, all the emphasis is ultimately put on Western Catholicism, on the Church as the heir and successor of—Christ? No, of the Roman Empire and the Roman imperial spirit. Christian Byzantium is anathema; the churches and teachers of Asia might never have existed; northern Europe is outside the pale of a closed corporation called "Christendom"; Islamic civilization was no more, or less, than one of the avatars of the apocalyptic Antichrist.

A cultural hegemony of Italy, France and the Iberian peninsula* on account of their superior excellence may easily be mistaken for a variant of Mussolini's new Roman empire, and it is not surprising that its partizans should, however mistakenly, be supposed to have a tenderness for his political and social ideas.

There are two other aspects of "latinophilism" that must be briefly mentioned. One is an excessive, not to say sentimental, regard for the profession of arms and for war as a factor in human affairs, a regard going beyond what is justly due to the soldier who fights in a righteous and necessary war, and to the art, fortitude and other virtues called for thereby. It would appear that the priest and the soldier are the twin pillars of society—a sinister concept, and an historically familiar one.†

Jewry

The other is an attitude to and "tone of voice" about Jewry and the problems it presents that falls little short of formal anti-semitism. Some years ago a leading English latinophile wrote a book about the Jews which was put forward as a dispassionate and impartial treatment of the subject: but a fair Jewish review of it began with the words, "Our enemy hath written a book." There is no need to point out where admiration of armed force and hatred of Jews flourish today.** To these things may be added the rather childish belief that modern Europe has been dominated by secret societies (especially the Grand Orient freemasons) and the contention that non-Catholic Englishmen react almost automatically against the causes of peoples that are Catholic, e.g., Czechs, Francoist Spaniards. The fact is that if today there is a certain suspicion of their Catholic fellow countrymen among many Englishmen, it is due to the latinophiles at home and to Mussolini and his like abroad.

However, the small minority of latinophiles do not represent the common attitudes of English Catholics (who are themselves a small minority in the whole population). If latinophile views meet us at every turn, it is because their holders include some very well-known, influential and highly talented people, who have entry to the columns of several periodicals, Catholic and general. I have deliberately not mentioned them by name, for they do not form a homogeneous body and are not necessarily in complete agreement about the matters I have touched on. Two names, however, I have mentioned and I refer again to them now because they are, as it were, "fathers," the oldest and best known of the latinophiles.

Hilaire Belloc, half French, speaks as an Englishman but thinks as a Frenchman. His assertion that "The Faith is Europe and Europe is the Faith" comes near to being the keystone of the latinophile arch. The assertion as it stands is false; as Mr. Belloc understands it, it is doubly false, for by "Europe" he means only France, Italy and Spain. More than once the editor of *The Sower*, Father S. J. Gosling, has rebuked Mr. Belloc for speaking of "the religion of Europe" rather than the religion of Christ, reminding him that Catholicism is a religion, not a culture; the same writer finds in some of Belloc's utterances the most powerful witness for what bigoted anti-Catholicism there is in this country, and a chief representative of "the barrier that divides the political outlook of Catholics of my generation from the new alliances that [some] more modern Catholics seek to make." Mr. Belloc is a real master of English writing, a man of extraordinary versatility, who has dedicated his life and great abilities to the public weal; but some of his services to the Church have, in the opinion of many, proved to be disservices.

Many of us will always remember the late Gilbert Chesterton as a huge man with a huge heart and a pen of tireless liveliness, a man that we loved. But toward the end of his life he also walked in latinophile ways, and led some of his large following after him. It appears clearly in his posthumous book, "The End of the Armistice." The urgency of another war against Germany; the emphasis on secret societies and approval of the fascist "counter-revolution" in Italy; Vienna, Paris and Rome are cultured because Catholic, "London is ruled out with Berlin"; the romantical and slightly hysterical tang of "Poland and Catholic

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* Since they are indubitably Catholic, the Polish and Austrian peoples are sometimes admitted as very junior partners. But what part have they, and the Normans, Bretons and Basques, in "the holy soil of Catholic *Latinity*"?

† A latinophile wrote: "On the issue of the religious wars in France depended the preservation or destruction of Catholicism in Europe." And a priest replied; "I would protest against that with all the vehemence that my faith is able to inspire. If Catholicism depended for its preservation on the results of battles, then Catholicism would have lost an essential note of Christianity."

** It should be remembered that France showed Germany how to be anti-semitic—and the pupil has improved on the master.

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culture thrust like a sort of long sword-blade between the Byzantine traditions of Muscovy and the materialism of Prussia." . . . We prefer to remember G.K.C. as the enthusiastic smiter of oppression and humbug who wrote, "We are the people of England—and we have not spoken yet."

These are bad times for latinophiles, without the added nuisance of being called fascist. The "long sword-blade of Poland" is smashed; the vision of France they held up to us so insistently has vanished in the fumes of chemicals and propaganda; Catholic Italy has joined hands with nazidom; Catholic Spain may do the same. If freedom and justice and unconstrained religion in the immediate future really depend on the issue of this war, then they depend on Protestant, liberal, muddle-headed (so they call us) England—and America. But what about the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics? In any case the sword of the spirit is mightier than the machine-guns of the flesh or the virtues of imperial Rome.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

MY REMARKS this week have been suggested by a number of things: a book, a magazine article, the meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association and other happenings, all of them leading toward one thought that more and more, it seems to me, should be uppermost in the minds of American Catholics, and indeed of all Americans to whom the influence of the Church becomes daily of growing interest, and strangely commingled significance. By some of our separated brothers in the Christian faith and by other brothers of the Jewish dispensation and by others again who have separated themselves not only from the parent stem of that Church from which all the innumerable varieties of modern Christianity derive their original force, but also from all other forms of organized religion, the influence of the Catholic Church is resented, feared and contested. By the larger number of our non-Catholic fellow citizens, I think, the Church's influence is observed with curiosity, sympathy, friendliness and a growing willingness to cooperate with it in all fields where the Church itself, as guided by its responsible rulers and teachers, welcomes and returns such cooperation. All such Americans, however, both those alarmed at or hostile to the Church's influence, or interested in it, and acquiescent, even eager, in their faith in its beneficence would agree, so I believe, that whether for good or for bad ends, as they view the matter, that influence is growing most powerfully, evoked by the needs of our time of crisis.

The book that was among the things suggesting these remarks is "Father De Smet: Pioneer Priest of the Rockies" (by Helene Margaret, Farrar & Rinehart, $3.00). No doubt it will be reviewed in THE COMMONWEAL later. All I can do, at present, is heartily to recommend it. The magazine article is the leading contribution to the January number of Maryknoll's zestful recorder of its marvelous mission activities, *The Field Afar,* written by no less an authority than the Apostolic Delegate to the United States, Archbishop Cicognani. The third thing referred to above, the annual convention of the American Catholic Historical Association, is, as I write, in session at the Hotel Pennsylvania, New York, in cooperation with the American Historical Association and kindred bodies. Of this year's work of our Catholic historians and students I shall write more fully later on. Let me hope, now, that from the Catholic convention will come some such outspoken utterance against the totalitarian tyrannies as Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler so strongly voiced on behalf of the American Historical Association, a prelude to President Roosevelt's magnificent statement to our nation. America's secular history is one long story of opposition to slavery and tyranny. The history of the Catholic Church is the story of how mankind's inner spirit of freedom and human personality was introduced into human history by the Gospel of Christ, and by Our Lord's own life and death and resurrection. His continued presence in His Church is today the strongest assurance that freedom will prevail now as in the past, and for future times as well.

In Archbishop Cicognani's article, which is to serve as the foundation for a whole series of mission articles in *The Field Afar,* Father De Smet, the Belgian, is named as one of the greatest among the leaders of the Christian Catholic apostles and martyrs, stemming from nearly all the Catholic nations, who laid the foundations in America, and above all in the United States, not merely of the civilization which is now threatened from without and within by the subversive anti-God forces released by communism, nazism and fascism; but also of the structure of all the Christian organizations, central to them all being of course the Catholic Church. The Christian Faith and its derivative culture, its social institutions, its laws—our common law, for example, sprang from the English common law, as that in turn sprang from local custom spiritualized by the canon law of the Church—were brought to America from Europe, by missionaries and pioneers of many races and nations and forms of faith, yet, in the main, from Catholic sources. As the Apostolic Delegate now reminds his readers, it is clearly the payment of a great debt—in gratitude, in honor and most gladly—for America, and especially for Catholic America, now to take up the burden of the Church's vast work in spreading the Christian gospel, and the culture that accompanies that gospel, throughout the rest of the world—perhaps to take it back again to Europe, for that devastated continent's rejuvenation.

The Archbishop's splendid sketch of our multi-racial Catholic origins in the United States should remind us of the happy circumstance that today, as the names in our Catholic universities, seminaries and novitiates amply show, our priesthood and our religious societies of both men and women, like the main body of the American faithful itself, shows forth the zeal and faith of many diverse races and nations. Such facts should likewise remind us that no one race predominates either in shaping Catholic policy in the

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United States or is entitled to be considered the most "representative" element in Catholicism in the United States. These are facts which might be remembered to the great advantage of both the Church and the nation by certain noisy minorities whose unwise animosities against Great Britain (springing out of the past) and toward Protestantism, as a remembrance of old, unhappy far off things, and battles long ago—and of mutual persecutions—now incite them to statements and action of a sort that the majority of their fellow American Catholics heartily deplore, but also most emphatically repudiate.

Finally all the things that together led my thoughts in the direction of this week's chat with my readers met in a recollection that had haunted my mind all along, but did not define itself clearly until that point was reached in my effort to express myself which is familiar to all writers, namely, the point of drawing one's thoughts into unity. Then I remembered what Pope Pius XI said to a group of young married couples visiting him not long before his death. The old and worn-out ruler of the Church, who was dying then, had been disappointed, apparently, in the outcome of his mighty efforts to effect reconciliation between the government of Italy and the Church. His still mightier efforts to grapple with and overcome the mounting power of organized anti-Christianity in Russia and especially in Germany had failed. Finally, from out of the black shadow of the coming war, already darkening the world he viewed from the topmost tower in Christendom, the Pope said to the young people—well, what do you think he said? Words of despondency or of doubt or fear or even of uncertainty? Not at all! He told them it was glorious to be alive in times like these; wonderful also to be young; but the oldest as well as the youngest ought to rejoice and be glad to be alive and taking part in God's great work of transforming the world society. For that God's plan will succeed where all other plans may fail is certain.

Communications

CHRISTMAS AT DACHAU

Seattle, Wash.

TO the Editors: I think it was good to print the Christmas story on Dachau in your December 20 issue. It will always be good to remind your readers that it is not just Britain's will to "keep a fifth of the earth under her control," as we read now in our papers, which brought about this war, but that Europe is fighting against a spirit which one can only call the evil one. This sort of thing has now been going on for eight years and is still going on. And yet so many fellow Catholics in our immediate neighborhood brush these things aside and raise their accusing finger against Britain, pre-Vichy France, Poland and others, as if they were just as much to blame for the disaster. Especially Britain with her sins three hundred years old and forgotten—at least by Christians. Yet this goes on and on and only one or two nations resist.

The only correction I would like to make as to your translation refers to the sect of the "Exegetists." The German name is *"Ernste Bibel Forscher,"* literally the "earnest Bible exegetists." That is, however, the name which the Witnesses of Jehovah, Judge Rutherford's sect, assumed in German-speaking countries. Whatever one may think of them in other respects, they never bowed down before Hitler, and thousands of them went to his concentration camps. We should be fair and recognize this, and hope that we may have the same courage for truth with which they suffer for their distorted gospel.

REV. H. A. REINHOLD.

FEEDING EUROPE

Moline, Ill.

TO the Editors: It is perhaps presumptuous to say that the Holy Father had Americans in mind when on December 21 he expressed the hope that all would "do honor to the good traditions of civilized life by not permitting the children of belligerent countries, or those in any way involved in the war, to suffer unmerited pain."

But it does remain a blot on those Catholic Americans who allowed their hatred of the evildoer to include his innocent victims. With the encouragement of these Catholics, England denies us the right to feed, from our abundant surplus, our best friends in Europe, and to save them from despair and death.

The bedrock logic of it all is that the end justifies the means. And that is Hitlerism in all its ugly deviltry.

REV. J. B. CULEMANS.

The Stage & Screen

Old Acquaintance

MR. JOHN VAN DRUTEN is one of the few men now writing for the stage who knows how to write high comedy. His touch is at once delicate and sure; his sense of character, particularly on the distaff side, keen and subtle; his dialogue witty, often distinguished. Perhaps the war will end this type of writing; a general leveling process will certainly end it; but if end it does, the world will be the poorer. It presupposes a certain amount of leisure, a willingness in the audience to forget for the moment social questions and to interest itself in the interplay of human character. High comedy may not be, in the critical jargon of the day, important, but it is one of the marks of a civilized society. "Old Acquaintance" tells a simple story—the surrender of middle age to youth, and of the friendship of two women, bound together by the thousand ties of a common girlhood, ties which prove stronger than differences of character and outlook. Mr. Van Druten has told this story poignantly and wittily, and Dwight Deere Wiman has cast it shrewdly. Never has Jane Cowl been more radiant, or in her moments of emotion truer, than in the character of the novelist who gives up her lover to the daughter of her childhood friend. In the part of the friend, Peggy Wood gives the most subtle and amusing performance of her career, and Kent Smith, looking like Anthony Eden, for the first time in his

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career acts with grace and lightness. Adele Longmire, despite the need for greater cultivation of voice, is as the young girl sincere and appealing. In addition Auriol Lee has staged the play sensitively, and Richard Whorf has designed two admirable settings. "Old Acquaintance" is the one true comedy so far this year. *(At the Morosco Theatre.)*

My Sister Eileen

THIS IS a farce-comedy by Joseph Fields and Jerome Chodorov, based on *New Yorker* stories by Ruth McKenney. It tells of life in Greenwich Village and is veritable enough in it chief characterizations. But truth isn't what makes the play, but rather the goofy doings of a number of characters out of cloud-cuckoo land. George S. Kaufman is always at home in staging such doings, and he has done a good job of it this time. The first two acts are hilariously funny, helped along by the excellent performances of Shirley Booth, Morris Carnovsky, George Cotton, Richard Quine, Gordon Jones, Bruce MacFarlane, and William Post, Jr., and the beauty of Jo Ann Sayers. The last act is less hilarious but good enough. It is, in short, an amusing play, even a gay one. And the acting of Miss Booth in particular is admirable. *(At the Biltmore Theatre.)*

Two Musicals

"PAL JOEY" has a real book, though not a pleasant one. John O'Hara knows his night-club life and he doesn't sentimentalize it. There isn't a really decent person in the action. Indeed the evening is made bearable only by the rare performance of Vivienne Segal and by her beautiful singing. She makes a despicable character charming, which may not be ethical, but which at least prevents one from becoming queasy. Gene Kelly is admirable as the gigolo-hoofer, and there are good performances by June Havoc and Leila Ernst. The music and lyrics are by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, and one song, "Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered," is one of the best things they have done. I heard it three days ago, and it's still singing in my head. *(At the Ethel Barrymore Theatre.)*

"Meet the People" is a musical revue staged by some young people from Hollywood, three of whom, Elizabeth Talbot-Martin, Jack Williams and Doodles Weaver, will probably be heard from. But the revue itself, despite some excellent ideas, does not seem to ring the bell. It will probably, however, please our isolationists. *(At the Mansfield Theatre.)* GRENVILLE VERNON.

Wingless Victory

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL subleties of Joseph Conrad's novels seem too difficult an assignment for cinema. However, the new film version of *"Victory"* is a definite improvement over the first. While many aspects of John Cromwell's direction are good, when the film is finished one has the feeling of having witnessed a series of symbols in action, not the living story of flesh-and-blood people. After the slow and heavily atmospheric introduction of this strange, unreal conglomeration of characters, one is interested but left cold by the hasty solution of victory over fear and evil. What fascination the film has is found in its mysterious mood and setting: the Javanese hotel run by the abnormal Schombergs (Sig Rumann and Margaret Wycherly), the house on the deserted island; and in its queer people: Fredric March as the recluse who believes that the man who forms a tie is lost; Betty Field as the orphan pianist who seeks refuge in March's ivory tower to escape the foul designs of Schomberg; Cedric Hardwicke, Jerome Cowan and Lionel Royce as three manifestations of evil: the bored, sophisticated thrill hunter, the lustful scheming killer, the dumb brute force of wickedness. Audiences not looking for too much Conrad will see "Victory" as an effective melodrama of violence.

After becoming accustomed to Paul Muni's French-accented English in *"Hudson's Bay,"* one finds the picture quite passable entertainment. Muni succeeds in portraying a moving characterization as he makes Pierre Radisson a combination of practical idealist, who sees big things for the future of a well-stocked Canada, with a warm humanitarian who has a heart and frequent conversations with le Bon Dieu. Radisson with Indian guides and two white pals (Laird Cregar as a monstrous, rough backwoodsman and John Sutton as a wealthy, exiled Englishman who learns much about men, nature and money values from the fur traders) makes his way, during the 1660's, into unchartered Canadian wilderness to the rich fur country at Hudson's Bay. Local color comes with beautiful shots of the dangerous trek through treacherous rivers and mountainous country, and with sickening meals served by friendly Indians. Director Irving Pichel saves his film from becoming another grim, trudging "Northwest Passage" by twice shifting the scene to London and the court of Charles II (played traditionally by Vincent Price with lace handkerchief, Nell Gwyn and spaniels). Arriving with lynx, sable, beaver and ermine skins, Radisson through court influence is able to form the Hudson's Bay Company. But on the second London visit, Radisson and his two friends, although again laden with furs, are clapped into prison for executing in Canada an Englishman who traded brandy for skins against Radisson's strict orders. Of course the three men are freed. Lamar Trotti's screenplay is not to be taken too seriously. Everyone in it seems to agree with sly winks that these men, who planted the British flag on this new colony, were rogues—just rogues.

Two new-to-this-country French films (with English titles) are currently being shown to darken and brighten, respectively, these dubious days. *"Hotel du Nord,"* directed by Marcel Carne, is a Gallic "Grand Hotel" with a large assortment of unusual types. But unfortunately along with the good, bad, mean, cowardly, abnormal, deceitful and vicious, the script forgot to include the comic; and the result is so sordid and drab that it gives a completely perverted picture of life. However, as in so many French films, the realistic touches and the portrayals are outstanding. Not only Annabella, Louis Jouvet and Arletty, but all the actors, even those in the smallest minor rôles, turn in performances that are far superior to the depressing and half-baked material. . . . *"They Met on Skis"* will take

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the dark brown taste out of your mouth, especially if you like snow, majestic mountain scenery and winter sports. It's too bad that Director Henri Sokal didn't skim over the plot, which is as thin and silly as a bad varsity show. An actor like Charpin deserves better. However, the pretty young girls and enthusiastic boys, all glowing with health, manage to instil a contagious gayety into the affair. For breathtaking skiing, glistening snow scenes and the awesome magnificence of the French Alps, "They Met on Skis" is your picture. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

American Politics

The Middle Classes in American Politics. Arthur N. Holcombe. Harvard. $2.50.

PROFESSOR HOLCOMBE'S book brings together a number of his addresses and essays, all bearing more or less directly on the central thesis that the middle classes have had and are destined to continue to have the predominant share in shaping the course of American politics. This manifest destiny is at once an historical fact, an interpretation of history, and a rule of practical politics. As a rule of practical politics it is as old as Aristotle. As an interpretation of history, Professor Holcombe suggests that it fits the facts better than Pareto's theory of the élite and Marx's theory of the class struggle. Professor Holcombe regrets that Kant's prospectus for a rational interpretation of world history was misused by Hegel and Marx. While Professor Holcombe has done great service in showing that political analysis is more profitable in terms of justice and freedom than in terms of class consciousness and struggle, it is doubtful whether the Kantian antinomy of a freedom separated from nature can serve any other philosophy of history than Hegel's or Marx's.

The preservation of a preponderance of power in the hands of the middle classes, argues Professor Holcombe, will guarantee a sound system of American politics. This system is taken to imply a "public interest" characterized by respect for the dignity of man, government by consent of the governed, and the reign of law under a republican form of government. The middle classes which are constituted less as an economic category than as a state of mind have always been on the side of these essentials of the American way of life. The second part of Professor Holcombe's study impressively analyzes the shifting and incidence of political power in the United States, and indicates that the urban middle class is apparently destined to play a part in the politics of the future comparable to that played by the rural middle class in the past. The structure of the American political system, and particularly the two-party system, have instrumented the ascendancy of the middle classes to power. Professor Holcombe has little patience with proposals to alter the bi-partisan system, for it is precisely this system which guarantees the ascendancy of moderate elements and serves as an obstacle to unpopular presidential elections.

Political structures and processes do not of themselves provide reason for confidence in the future of American democracy. Professor Holcombe rightly seeks a sound political philosophy. The new urban middle class is, it is admitted, more class conscious than was the rural middle class of the last century. American political life, it need not be urged, is increasingly affected by ideas from abroad. And our educational system, in which Professor Holcombe has faith, and which, as Professor Holcombe says is in the long run the most characteristic feature of our constitution, can scarcely be relied upon to defend democracy by any argument other than the external one of cultural bias. There are not many professors in our universities who are capable of as excellent a plea for democracy as Professor Holcombe has made; and yet even Professor Holcombe's defense is almost wholly limited to the mere marshalling of evidence in support of a prospect, and to an act of faith in Kant's philosophy of history. The future of democracy, even as Professor Holcombe admits, depends ultimately upon a proper education. That education cannot begin with Kant, whose theory of political evolution, as Etienne Gilson has remarked, "is perhaps nought but the phantom of the City of God haunting the ruins of a metaphysic."

CHARLES N. R. MCCOY

The Pattern of Politics. J. T. Salter. Macmillan. $2.25.

THIS IS politics in the raw. If you want the low-down on this favorite American game, this book will give it to you spiced and tart. It is of the earth—earthy. From the title you would expect a scholarly discussion garnished with all the present day language of the political science cult: "circulation of the élite," "pyramid of deference," and "emerging trends"—all, of course, buttressed by fancy charts and columns of statistics. One could think of a number of titles that would better fit this volume, titles that might even make of it a best seller.

The book contains many very humorous and very human stories of the American "dough boys"—the politicians. While works similar to this have been written before—works which show a thorough understanding of the political game—yet the confused and puzzled citizen needs to have the lesson repeated. The American voter needs to be reminded that the corruption in politics is not unlike the corruption in other walks of our social life. The same craving for favoritism and power finds its counterpart in business, professions, in church, in almost every activity of life. *Homo Americanus* is an avid seeker of special favors, whether he tries to "fix" the policeman that arrests him for speeding, or pulls strings to get a friend out of a scrape, or even jumps to the head of a waiting line to get into the confessional or plunges pell-mell on to the communion rail on Sunday, at the risk of trampling over the prostrate forms of his fellow-communicants. The politician, or political broker, thrives on this common failing. Professor Salter does a good job in showing how it is done.

While the author warns of the dangers of the system and, in general, seems to show that in his own mind there is no separation of politics from ethics, he does not believe that the American public has much of a deep conviction on the ethical side. Our ideals on democracy, he believes, are in a state of flux. "These ideals," he says, "are embodied in men—in heroics." Would it not be well, however, for Mr. Salter to point out the danger of basing our democratic system on any such shifting anthropocentric basis? Grave danger exists in the hazy, fuzzy and emotional attitude toward democracy which most people have. There are lasting values in it, else it cannot endure. Perhaps Mr. Salter writing in such a breezy manner did not care to slacken his pace for such ponderous considerations.

JEROME G. KERWIN.

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BIOGRAPHY

Still Small Voice. August Derleth. Appleton-Century. $3.00.

THIS is a biography of Zona Gale. Her native endowment was a rich one, but her fragile external appearance did not do justice to her very real powers of mind and spirit. Good sense, taste, a sense of beauty, a clear, vigorous mind, creative power, all these were hers. She directed all of them toward her central purpose, success in writing. Her ambition was fostered early by her parents, who sent her from her native "Friendship Village," Portage, Wisconsin, to the University of Wisconsin. Here, many years later, she was to pass on to numerous young writers the aid and inspiration which had been potent forces in her own development.

The range of her various types of experience, including newspaper work in Milwaukee and New York, and the breadth of her personal interests relate her to significant social, humanitarian and political movements. She had an active part in the feminist movement, she was devoted to pacifism and she remained a loyal Progressive even after her allegiance had been endangered by a controversy between two of her friends, Glenn Frank and Philip LaFollette. She continued her friendship with Glenn Frank until her death on December 27, 1938, but she also continued her loyalty to the ideals of the Progressive Party.

It is not surprising that the best part of the story which August Derleth tells is that of Zona Gale as a writer. Here one finds a considerable amount of genuine criticism of her creative work. There is an analysis of her early Pater-like devotion to beauty and romance and a tracing of her development to maturity as a novelist of real and human characters and plots. Friends of Zona Gale will welcome this book. Those who did not know her may appreciate something of her personal power and literary achievement by reading this sympathetic account of her life and the fragment of her autobiography which is included. LOIS BYRNS.

From Panama to Verdun. Philippe Bunau-Varilla. Dorrance. $2.50.

THIS volume, interesting though it is, shows clearly the limitations of autobiography. Should a great man tell how great he is? A biographer can legitimately praise his hero to the skies, but is it the same thing when the hero is his own mouthpiece? Yet it would be uncharitable to criticize too harshly the pride of a man of eighty-one, writing his memoirs in the last year of his life, after an almost incredible career which saw him at twenty-six in full charge of the digging of the Panama Canal for the French Company, and again at Verdun losing a leg while engaged in purifying the water used by the army.

This amazing man almost single-handed lobbied so effectively in the American Congress that he defeated the Nicaragua Canal scheme by mailing each Congressman a postage stamp of Nicaragua proudly displaying a smoking volcano! He was largely instrumental in engineering the Panama Revolution and hastened to sign the Hay-Bunau-Varilla treaty before the Panamanians could limit his powers as their Minister in Washington. He was animated constantly by a fanatical devotion to his country, France, and to the Panama Canal scheme. But it is a pity that he had to say for himself the things which better taste would put into the mouth of some enthusiastic biographer. WALTER JOHN MARX.

The Life of Sir William Osler. Harvey Cushing, M.D. Second edition. Oxford. $5.00.

IT SEEMS only a little while ago that Sir William and mischievous little Max shouted with laughter as I lifted my hat from the hall table, after lunch, and the cabbage leaves hidden in it fell all about the floor.

And I had indiscreetly told Max's mother how I had read in the morning paper that the secular beeches around her native Copenhagen had been felled to open ranges for the Danish guns. A few days later she was so thoughtful as to write and reassure me, evoking from me the lyric outburst:

Long live your beeches
Safe from the Boche.
Hope Heinie reaches
Never your *roches;*
Though hist'ry teaches
Such a hope tosh,
If you have peaches
Fit for his *pochcs,*
Unless your featu'es
Resemble Foch.

A year after that happy visit to Oxford Sir William was gone; then a little while and Cushing's two-volume biography appeared. Now Cushing is with Osler and we no longer discuss the beeches, nor laugh over their safety.

It is both too late and too early to review this biography now. The first applause has not ceased and the world is too young for final judgment. But let those who were not aware know that they can now have the most Oslerian of Osleriana in one volume and for the price of a Christmas present. The publishers have done what they could to make 1,372 pages of text and 43 of index something more than a substitute bible to break ganglia (weeping sinews to you) with.

The text is as in the first edition. Only eleven of the illustrations have been reproduced, among them the Menu of the American Physiological Society, the Memento of Three Celebrated Men, the Page of Agenda, and the Fictitious Examination Paper. EDWARD L. KEYES.

FICTION

Sapphira and the Slave Girl. Willa Cather. Knopf. $2.50.

WHAT a relief it is to read something written by an author who regards her trade as a craft, as something involving care and polish and refinement. Most books of the day seem to be thrown together with a maximum of regard for content and a minimum for that content's presentation. After all we know that however good the content may be, it needs skill in its presentation or it is likely to remain still-born in its unread printed pages.

To say that Miss Cather is a craftsman is almost to insult a reader's intelligence with a truism, yet one cannot help feeling that it needs saying, if only by way of precept and in the hope that it may inspire others to be likewise. "Sapphira and the Slave Girl" ranks, I believe, with "Death Comes for the Archbishop," "My Antonia" and "A Lost Lady." It is several notches above "Shadows on the Rock." Which means that all amateurs of her writing will consider the book a "must."

This time Miss Cather turns to a setting which played a part in her own life—western Virginia—and a period which has recently been greatly in vogue, the years immediately preceding the Civil War. Her story is really a study in the psychological effect of slavery on both slave and master, an almost geometrical demonstration of the proposition that whatever good things may result from

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slavery, it is bad and humanly perverting *in itself,* in the unnatural relationship it establishes between two children of God. And I don't care whether or not Miss Cather goes to church: she again demonstrates herself as steeped in Christianity: *anima naturaliter christiana.*

Sapphira is a Tidewater Virginian, a Dodderidge from the aristocratic part of the state; her husband, Henry Colbert, is a man of less exalted social position and of more admirable character. They live in the mountainous western part of the state, among people of a heritage different from both theirs. The wealth and the slaves belong to Sapphira; Henry is at heart opposed to the institution. Naturally their married life is not one of great intimacy or passion, and both have reached an age when passion naturally pales in any case. Yet there is enough to make Sapphira jealously suspicious of her slave girl, Nancy. She proceeds to do what only slavery could let her do: persecute Nancy by inviting a nephew of her huband's to visit them with a view to getting Nancy seduced. There is the situation, and the novel is simply a development of that situation, an analysis of the action in the situation and a recounting of its effect. To describe it further would be tedious; the best plan is to read the book.

One thing may be said, and with justice, against Miss Cather's way of writing. It can, on occasion, seem mannered and even a little thin. Sometimes her people are very close to being lay-figures, and seem to lack any particularizing touch. This is, of course, never true of her main characters: in this case Nancy, Sapphira, Henry Colbert. And perhaps there is genius in this simplifying emphasis on one or two persons, leaving the rest of the *dramatis personae* to serve as accessories to the main action and study. Yet the effect is, indeed, somewhat less than full-bodied.

But to object on this ground is to object unfairly. Miss Cather, if anyone, defines her problems, sets her own limits. And what she produces is so incomparably better than what most novelists produce that we should all be grateful.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

My Name Is Aram. William Saroyan. Illustrated by Don Freeman. Harcourt. $2.50.

HIS last name was Gar-oghlan-ian, best pronounced slowly, which means "of the dark sons" in Turkish, and he was one of the youngest members of the tribe of Gar-oghlan-ians who lived in Fresno in the San Joaquin Valley. Honesty was a tribal tradition; when farmer Byro's beautiful white horse was borrowed by Cousin Mourad, he impressed upon Aram that they must return it within six months at the latest. So they did and in such good shape that even the farmer remarked it. Being very poor was also a family characteristic, but what is poverty when one can leap a white horse over grapevines at four in the morning; play truant to work in the circus; drive a Packard for an Ojibway Indian oil magnate named Locomotive 38; help Uncle Melik plant his pomegranates in the desert or meet such friends of Uncle Khosrove as the "poor and burning" Arab, Khalil. These Armenian memories are honest and simple and very real. They are written with that combination of bravado and humility that is Saroyan's best charm, and with tenderness for small boyhood's turbulent mistakes and poor people's difficulties. Aram's adventures also let in a whole windowful of light on his people, with their heads still full of ancient Eastern dreams and their feet upon the tractor-ploughed soil of American democracy.

The stories, collected from the *Atlantic, Harper's,* etc., have amusing drawings by Don Freeman but are more enjoyable if not read all at one time. "Enough!" was the shouted retort of Uncle Khosrove, who had the largest mustache in the Valley but in this case we cannot agree. We would really like to know more of the tribal history of the Gar-oglhan-ians.

E. V. R. WYATT.

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog. Dylan Thomas. New Directions. $2.50.

SURREALISM was never much more than a mode, limited in its appeal to the esoteric minded. Its collapse as an art movement, in the applied arts and literature and under the impact of immediate and bitter realities, makes the few recurring literary specimens in this mode seem dated. This is true of the book here considered, the title of which, "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog," is indicative of the character of its contents. Promiscuous sexuality among people whose moral and spiritual horizon is determined by the limits of physical experience is also a told story. While the author is by no means a second D. H. Lawrence, he is a talented writer. The futility of his characters, however, who all seem to be "young dogs," even though some are no longer young, restricts the scope of the book. It is, unfortunately, not so much of the earth as it is of the garbage heap. In it, lust is without lustiness; the sin is of a grovelling kind, and if the title may be taken as indicating the author's distaste for the life he delineates, we may assume that it is not his conscience so much as his sense of propriety that is revolted. The combination of naturalistic material with a surrealist treatment is a clever idea, and there is a unity between the decadence of the material and that of its treatment. There is also basis for the suspicion that the author is capable of more vitally important work and that this book is a self-consciously devised piece of writing in which he is displaying his literary virtuosity.

BARRY BYRNE.

HISTORY

Love Stories of Old California. Mrs. Frémont Older. Coward-McCann. $3.50.

FROM the well-stocked history of California between the years of 1775 and 1880, Mrs. Frémont Older has selected twenty-four love stories, some touching, some scandalous and all based on either authentic history or well nurtured legend. Perhaps it is because Mrs. Older is over anxious to portray the full flavor of the romantic past or perhaps it is because writing history as if it were fiction is too demanding a task, but somehow the book falls into a twilight state between fact and fancy so that the reader is left to the sad conclusion that he has encountered neither authority nor imagination in full and proper scope. This is too bad, for Mrs. Older is an able historian.

Naturally in a book of love stories one expects the click of castanets and the strumming of guitars to sound louder than the call of the Angelus, but, though the author is very generous in her tributes to the Padres, she has failed to reach the essential, underlying Catholic life of early California. For instance, to say "Franciscans brought to California tolerance for crimes of violence" is to miss as cleanly as possible the essence of Franciscan charity and teaching, just as to say, " 'Worship the Virgin!' commanded the gray-robed men" is to misunderstand completely devotion to the Blessed Mother.

The most memorable story of all is neither a scandal

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nor a romance, but the account of an Indian mother's heroic love for her child and the almost incredible survival of the woman for eighteen years on San Nicolas Island off the coast of Santa Barbara. From her truly wide and deep knowledge of California history Mrs. Older has mined some rich ore, but it is still ore and not fine gold.

JAMES L. DUFF.

MISCELLANEOUS

Eye Witness. Edited by Robert Spiers Benjamin. Alliance. $2.75.

EUGENE LYONS says, in his epilogue to this book, "No correspondent who expects to remain at his post more than twenty-four hours goes out digging for stories which his official hosts are unwilling to release." Thus the field of unobstructed news is closed to foreign correspondents, except for official hand outs. And we may well have to turn to such books as this, which allow these news gatherers ample opportunities to relate the strange and the interesting activities of peoples the world over.

Starting with Peggy Hull's adventure, that of standing up before an advancing battle line, as the last act she could do to save her life, the editor, Robert Spiers Benjamin presents us with many other contributions, some not quite so breathtaking, others fully so.

The Editor's own story deals with the fishing fleet on the Grand Banks off Newfoundland, reporting the everyday happenings of men who fish for a living. Lucien S. Kirtland's experience is of riding around the streets of an all Indian Conference with a crazy Cockney, waving a gun and shooting with a movie camera. Walker Matheson reports a weird custom of ancient China, performing suicide before your enemy's house so that you will haunt him ever after. Barnet Hershey's story is of the German newspaper men at the Treaty of Versailles, and Morrill Cody tells of having the position of a spy thrust upon him, which cost the American Government the price of "a lot of drinks."

These are just a few of the twenty-three tales in this book; and the others are by no means to be overlooked, for they all truly depict the daily life of a foreign correspondent.

PHILIP H. WILLIAMS.

An Essay on Nature. Frederick J. E. Woodbridge. Columbia. $3.00.

THERE is much in this book that is directly contrary to both the Catholic and Protestant viewpoint. It is probably true that some of this material will be overlooked by many readers because of their not making the natural inferences from Professor Woodbridge's arguments. However, when he states of man, "His faith, simply confessed, is that with the supernatural there is salvation. His superstition, simply expressed, is that the supernatural can be diverted by his faith in it and by the ceremonies emblematic of his faith," the application to prayer and religious services will be obvious to all.

The book is also likely to be condemned unjustly for contentions that are actually in a very different category from the above. The human law of polemics seems to be that the listener respectfully notes the speaker's definition or use of terms and then straightway interprets him according to the listener's own definition, and consequently disagrees with him. Those who listen or read in this manner will find in Woodbridge's distinction between "faith" and "belief" a cause for concern.

Even though one disagrees with the conclusion of the book, it must be admitted that it is likely to live long as a contribution to naturalism. And one might even regret that the author evidences a balanced, disciplined and tolerant outlook that is enviable.

J. MC A. KATER.

The Silence of the Sea. Hilaire Belloc. S. & W. $2.50.

OF THESE forty-eight essays by Hilaire Belloc, some are good, some are indifferent and some are downright bad. Not that Mr. Belloc ever writes badly; in the worst of these essays there is a distinction and lean beauty of language that would make a new writer; but there is no dodging the fact that a good many of them are trivial in content. The author's earlier books of essays, "On Anything" or "A Conversation with a Cat," to take two at random, were made up of small masterpieces, but this volume intrudes upon much good observation and poetic wisdom a heavy, weary humor that is something new to Mr. Belloc's admirers. No one will deny that the European scene during the past few years has been a bad place for the cultivation of that philosophic mood which is the soul of the personal essay; conceivably, this is sufficient excuse.

The essays on literary subjects are all excellent; each contains its grain of critical insight, its point well taken and illuminating, its testimony of reading and thought. Excellent also are the essays on things seen. It is when he plays with abstract notions and labors with trivial fancies that even Mr. Belloc's style falters and fails.

J. G. E. HOPKINS.

RELIGION

Our Lady of Wisdom. Maurice Zundel. S. & W. $1.50.

THIS CHARMING little blue book on Our Lady enshrines the Mother of God as *Sedes Sapientiae*. In Prologue, six short chapters, and Epilogue the author unfolds the unique character and destiny of the Blessed Virgin as of one "wholly yielded up to the eternal Wisdom who was His Father's only Son and hers." The uniqueness of her life lies in her total altruism; that is, from the first moment of her conception to the last dim hour of her life on earth she was "wholly ordered to Jesus." She made the perfect human response to God's word, so that in her there was "the confluence of Divine and human altruism, Divine and human poverty." In her therefore wisdom and poverty met; in her was exemplified the entering into the deeps of the first beatitude—"Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." The mystery of Mary is precisely her living relation to the Word made flesh.

There is throughout the book this ever recurring theme, viz., the utter response of creature to Creator, of human being to Divine Being, of selfless love to Divine Lover, of man's consent to God's will. Open the book where you will, this theme strikes you in one guise or another. And as Mary is all-given to Divine Wisdom, so her being is flooded with the same and her influence is to draw all others unto God. "Her transparence is that of a sacrament which cannot but bring us to God. . . .

Her influence is wherever the Savior is to come to dwell, wherever there shines any reflection of His life. That is to say she is universal—according to her own mode, which is to efface herself in Jesus. So that her unique aim is to produce in us a union ever more immediate and personal with Jesus." Such a theme, being profoundly true theology, lends itself easily to noble writing, and

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Zundel's passages are often nobly poetic. "In the ceaseless oblation of her whole being," he writes, "Mary stands for ever as a monstrance for the showing forth of her Son."

Scattered through the book are five full-page black and white reproductions of paintings of Our Lady by Memling, Filippino Lippi, David and others. Three are frequent passages of scripture from Psalms, Canticles and Gospels that figure in the Liturgy of Our Lady. The typography is beautiful, the theme noble and the theology skilfully wrought out. So rich and yet so simple, vastly different from many an earlier work on the Blessed Virgin, this little book should find a home wherever her children are. A fine gift. RICHARD FLOWER.

BRIEFERS

Hear Me, My Chiefs. Herbert Ravenel Sass. Morrow. $2.50.

THE INDIAN'S brave defense of his unspoiled America is the theme around which the thirteen chapters of this unusual book are more or less loosely grouped. Several of the chapters, particularly that entitled "Epic of Sauts the Bat," are in excellent short story form. Others are descriptive: "The Warrior's Path," "Pageant of the Herds," "Wonder of the Air." One chapter is devoted to the mythology of the Cherokee. The struggle of the Indian to keep his continent, and details on the aboriginal continent itself, form the background against which vivid personalities and dramatic episodes are projected. The approach is a fresh one. The historian might object to an occasional generalization which seems too sweeping, but the volume is especially interesting in view of the fact that many of the names are new to the general reader, some of the incidents pictured have been ignored by the historian and a large number of the facts are available only in the original source material which the author has utilized so well.

Social Well Springs. Edited by J. Husslein. Bruce. $2.50.

FATHER HUSSLEIN has gathered fourteen of the more important social encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII into one volume. Thus we have *Inscrutabli* (on the evils of society), *Quod Apostolici Muneris* (on the socialists), *Arcanum* (on Christian Marriage), *Diuturnum* (civil government), *Immortale Dei* (on the Christian Constitution of States), *Libertas Humana* (on Human Liberty), *Rerum Novarum* (on the condition of labor), etc. The book contains an excellent index. Some of the encyclicals are now out of print.

Industrial Disputes and Federal Legislation. T. R. Fisher. Columbia. $4.75.

THE AUTHOR surveys federal legislation from 1900 to 1939 affecting the coal, steel, railroad and automobile industries, and gives a brief account of the practical consequences of this legislation as well as the conditions and influences which occasioned its enactment. Essentially descriptive, it could have been less extensive in its scope and more profound in its analysis.

Today and Forever. Pearl S. Buck. John Day. $2.50.

THIS highly entertaining collection of short stories, most of them from the more popular men's and women's magazines, throws interesting sidelights on the character of the modern Chinese. Many of them have to do with the impact of Western culture on the age-old Confucian tradition.

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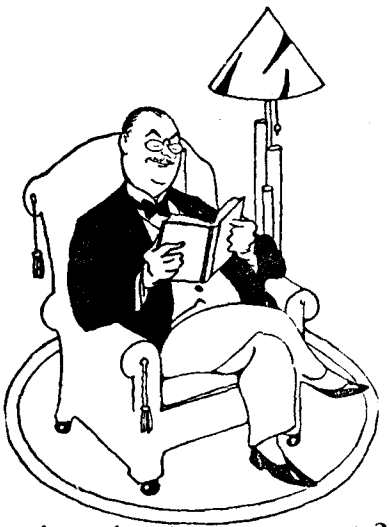

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REASONABLE RATES

The Inner Forum

WITH THE expected raising of the American army to 1,600,000, and the navy to 200,000 men, the number of active chaplains will be considerably increased. About 100 priests are now serving with the nation's armed forces; by next June the number is expected to be 400. Mass outfits for these chaplains include among other appurtenances an altar stone, a chalice, vestments, a Missal and missal stand, altar cards, glass cruets for the water and wine and a wine flask.

For a number of years the Chaplain's Aid Association of 401 West 59 Street, New York, has been supplying altar appurtenances to chaplains in the army and navy, veterans' hospitals and CCC camps, as well as foreign missionaries. In this they have had considerable help from convents and alumnae groups. This fall, for instance, the association and its local chapters supplied 18 Mass outfits, 19 sets of vestments, a number of altar cloths and altar linens, several sacred vessels as well as thousands of prayer-books and rosaries for individual soldiers, sailors and CCC boys.

The association is hard put to meet the increased needs created by the national defense drive. For one thing 7,000 pieces of altar linen are to be made this winter. New York headquarters will mail detailed instructions for making these needed linens to all who apply for them. And in cases where there is difficulty in finding the linen itself because of the war, the association will be glad to serve as purchasing agent for the volunteer workers. Another demand is for 1,500,000 prayer books and rosaries for the men. In order to provide an adequate supply of Catholic papers and magazines not more than a month or two old, high school and academy students will be asked to adopt an army post or naval station.

In his letter of welcome to new chaplains on active duty the Right Reverend Monsignor William R. Arnold, chief of chaplains of the US Army, said: "In these days there is alarming increase in the number of young men who have no knowledge of God and His eternal law, of the necessity of religious worship and discipline, and of the sure means provided by God for their spiritual growth and security. How shall they know if they are not taught? . . ."

CONTRIBUTORS

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